

Animal Industry

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Director



The Animal Industry Division of the Utah Department of Agriculture and Food has six main programs:

- 1) Animal Health — with special attention to animal diseases that can be transmitted to humans.
- 2) Meat and Poultry Inspection — to assure wholesome products for consumers.
- 3) Livestock Inspection (brand registration and inspection) — to offer protection to the livestock industry through law enforcement.
- 4) Fish Health — protecting the fish health in the state and dealing with problems of fish food production and processing.
- 5) Elk Farming and Elk Hunting Parks
- 6) Organic Food Program / Investigation and Compliance

Major accomplishments in these areas during the past year are as follows:

Animal Health

Disease free status was maintained in the following disease categories:

*Brucellosis *Tuberculosis *Scabies *Pseudorabies
*Salmonella pullorum *Mycoplasma gallisepticum

Disease monitoring programs continued from prior years include those for heartworm, equine encephalitis, equine infectious anemia, rabies, brucellosis, tuberculosis, pseudorabies, salmonella sp., mycoplasma, West Nile Virus, etc. The Division participated in a West Nile Virus Surveillance program in partnership with the Utah Department of Health, the Utah Division of Wildlife Resources, and the Utah Mosquito Abatement Association. The Division of Animal Industry role was to produce an updated pamphlet alerting horse owners concerning this disease, and to develop a training CD on West Nile Virus.

The Division has actively promoted various Health Assurance Programs and has served to certify participants. Such programs as Utah Egg Quality Assurance Program, Utah Cattle Health Assurance Program, Johnes's Disease Surveillance, Beef Quality Assurance, Trichomoniasis testing, the National Poultry Improvement Plan, and others are included in this effort. Division veterinarians met with the various livestock enterprise groups, farm organizations, veterinary associations and other groups in the state to receive input concerning their needs and to acquaint them with new programs.

The Division veterinarians monitored livestock imports into the state by reviewing 13,238 certificates of veterinary inspection and 1,950 livestock entry permits were issued. Approximately 110 violations of Utah import regulations were investigated, and 2 citations were issued with fines of \$284 collected. Over 18,000

ear tags were issued to veterinarians for use in the Trichomoniasis testing program.

The reported incidence of Heartworm in Utah remained the same as 2001, at 79 reported cases. The BLM and the Ute Tribe each gathered over 250 free ranging horses in the Hill Creek area and Department mandated monitoring for Equine Infectious Anemia revealed 6 cases of EIA in that area. Further surveillance for EIA is planned for 2003. Testing of nearly 15,000 bulls for Trichomoniasis identified 50 infected bulls in 2002.

The division is responsible for licensing hatcheries, qualified feedlot operators, and swine garbage feeders in the state. The number of hatcheries in the state continues to increase in the game bird industry. The division also administers the National Poultry Improvement Plan in the state. This is a voluntary testing program wherein a flock may be certified disease free in several important disease categories. Participants in the program enjoy significant benefits when shipping birds, eggs, and products in commerce.

Homeland Security has been a focus of the Division in 2001. The threat of agri-terrorism and the possibility of foreign animal disease being introduced to the state make this a top priority. The Division was successful in obtaining federal funding for developing a mobile emergency response capability. The Division has offered training and consultation in biosecurity measures to various groups.

The Animal Health section has the responsibility of providing veterinary supervision and service to the livestock auction markets in Utah in furtherance of our disease control and monitoring programs. The program is administered by the division, using private veterinarians on contract with the state. More than 500 weekly livestock sales conducted by 8 licensed and bonded sale yards in the state were serviced under this program. Division veterinarians also provided oversight for veterinarians and technicians involved with brucellosis vaccinations and veterinarians issuing certificates of veterinary inspection for interstate movement of animals. The division dispensed 43,070 doses of brucellosis vaccine and 71 vials of tuberculin for TB testing. The brucellosis vaccine program will be discontinued in the future due to budget constraints.

State and Federal Cooperative Laboratory

The State and Federal Cooperative Laboratory, which was previously housed and administered by the Department, was closed in June 2002 and the work load was transferred to the Utah Veterinary Diagnostic Laboratory in Logan in a budget saving effort.

Meat Inspection

There was only one personnel change during 2002 and that occurred when the Utah Meat and Poultry Inspection Program

manager, Dr. Chris Crnich, left on September 30 to fill the Director's position in the Division of Regulatory Services. In December 2002, Dr. Wyatt Frampton was promoted to the manager's position from the field veterinarian's staff.

The number of Utah inspected meat processing facilities throughout the state has grown slightly this past year. We have added three new processing facilities to our fully inspected state plants list. We routinely answer calls from individuals that are interested in pursuing an interest in the meat industry. Our staff is periodically asked to review and assist new plant managers in preparation of facilities to come under state meat inspection. We work to allow these individuals the opportunity to produce meat products in a clean, well built, and sanitarily maintained facility that fits the minimal requirements established by the United States Department of Agriculture.

The use of computers and software systems continues to make our jobs easier and more efficient. The front line inspector has at his fingertips all the meat regulations and notices and receives updates almost weekly. Information from the office can be passed on to each of the inspectors in minutes compared to trying to pass the information via the telephone or mail. By the end of 2003, we hope to have the Performance Based Inspection System (PBIS) installed so that even the state plants will be on the system so the individual inspector can download the performance tasks and upload the completed tasks for the plant that he/she is inspecting.

Microbiological testing has been and continues to be an important element in verifying that the HACCP process of inspection is working as intended. A total of 497 samples were collected by the meat inspection staff and tested for Salmonella sp. 108 samples were collected from Ready To Eat (RTE) products and tested for Salmonella, E. coli, and Listeria. In addition, the individual plants collected 234 samples for generic E. coli testing. All samples were negative. Our goal is to maintain the highest quality and safety that the Utah meat consumer has been used to up to this point and validate that confidence level with appropriate and timely testing.

During the past year, over 2,968 hours of training have been given to our staff. We feel that this training is vital in the effort to keep a highly trained and knowledgeable inspection staff. In the future, an even great emphasis will be placed on training.

Livestock Inspection

The Livestock (Brand) Inspection Bureau consists of 14 full-time special function officers and 50 part-time inspectors. Their job is to protect the Utah livestock industry from accidental straying or intentional theft of livestock. In addition to inspecting all cattle and horses at the state's eight weekly auctions, field inspections are done on all livestock prior to changing ownership, leaving the state and going to slaughter.

During 2002, a total of 729,511 individual cattle, horses and elk were inspected. Livestock worth an estimated \$1.1 million was returned to their proper owners.

Renewal of about 23,000 livestock brands and earmarks was accomplished in 2002. As mandated by law, the process occurs every five years in order to keep brands current. The next renewal will take place in 2005. In addition to each brand owner being listed in the Brand Book, the department issued everyone a

laminated wallet-size proof of ownership card. The ownership card is intended for use during travel and when selling animals at auctions. The new Brand Book and supplements are available to the public at a cost of \$25.00.

The brand department started collecting the cattlemen's part of predator control money in 1996. During 2002, livestock inspectors collected \$123,000 in predator control money. This money, like the beef promotion money, which has been collected by the brand inspectors for many years, will simply be forwarded to the Wildlife Services Program for its use. Sheep men will continue to have their allotment collect by the wool houses and forwarded to the department.

Monies collected for beef promotion equaled \$659,221.

In an effort to assist and give training to the state's port-of-entry personnel, a livestock inspector was assigned to work monthly in each port-of-entry. These inspectors are authorized and equipped to chase down those livestock transporters who ignore the signs requiring all livestock hauling vehicles to stop. This is an effort to help prevent diseased animals from entering the state and stolen animals from leaving the state. A new port-of-entry was added in 1998 in Loma, Colorado on I-70.

A heightened awareness in the meat industry has also resulted in the upgrading of the Farm Custom Slaughter Program to insure that meat derived from home grown, non-inspected livestock is prepared under the best conditions possible.

Finally, in an effort to prepare for animal health concerns and problems, the livestock inspectors have been involved in the GPS mapping of the state's "high density" livestock/poultry and processing sites.

Elk Farming and Hunting Parks

During the 1997 legislative session, the Domestic Elk Farming bill was passed allowing the farming of domestic elk on an individual's property. The brand bureau has been asked to regulate this new industry. In 1999, an amendment to the original law allows the licensing of domestic elk hunting parks. Livestock inspectors are involved in the inspection of new facilities and elk as they come and go from each licensed farm or park. They help verify identification, ownership, health, and genetic purity of every animal. Within the first five years of the passage of this law 42 new farms and six hunting parks have been licensed with a total of 2181 elk on inventory. An eight-member elk advisory council was formed to make recommendations and give direction to this industry.

Fish Health Program

By the end of FY 2002, thirty-three commercial aquaculture facilities (twenty facilities with live fish sales, ten facilities with dead fish sales, one fish processing plant, and two combined fish processing plants and dead fish sales) and 104 fee fishing facilities were registered with the UDAF, Fish Health Program. This is a 12% increase in licensed facilities over 2001. There are four commercial growers actively involved in fish brokering. Fourteen new applications, (twelve fee fishing sites and two aquaculture sites) were filed this year. This shows the increased interest in aquaculture in Utah. One aquaculture facility was closed for live fish sales due to whirling disease. One facility cleaned up

their whirling disease problem and is again available for live sales. Implementation of five biosecurity and health safety plans continued in an effort to prevent the spread of whirling disease. The number of species approval requests was 31. This represents an 85% increase over 2001. New species approvals include Arctic char, tilapia, marine penaeid shrimp and freshwater prawns. Major efforts are being made to develop these new areas of aquaculture in Utah.

Services extended to clients and the public include: 72 on-site consultations and distribution of information on aquaculture and fish diseases; on-site water quality tests conducted at 33 sites; ten diagnostic cases involving fish losses or water quality work were submitted respective to the Utah Veterinary Diagnostic lab and Utah State University (histology, bacteriology, parasitology, water quality, pesticide/heavy metals); issuing and renewing CORs to aquaculture facilities, fee fishing, brokering, and fish processing plants; inspecting fish at 29 facilities including over 2,588 fish sampled (1,676 fish for bacterial kidney disease; 2,091 for viruses; 1740 for whirling disease; 360 for other; 249 warm water fish); issuing 37 fish health approvals (21 to instate facilities and 16 to out-of-state facilities). Fifty-seven entry permits (16% increase over 2002) were issued for fifteen species of aquatic animals for a total of 2,722,024 fish and eggs and 23,300 additional lbs. of fish imported into Utah.

In August of 2001, the Fish Health Program resumed inspections of Utah brine shrimp processing plants. Twenty-three brine shrimp companies were inspected for a total of 43 quarterly inspections in 2002. These plants were inspected for sanitation, cleanliness, cyst disinfection, product testing and verification to determine if foreign cysts are imported to Utah, and also to ensure that waste products are disposed of properly.

During the year, the fish health specialist received certification as an American Fishery Society Fish Health Inspector. The Fish Health Program participates in continuing education lectures and presentations to enhance and promote the knowledge of fish health and aquaculture.

One issue of Aquaculture in Utah newsletter was published in 2002. Articles dealt with the New Zealand mud snail, late fee assessment, fish farming, mosquito fish, new fee-fishing and aquaculture facilities, and properly maintaining fish feed.

Two proposals seeking funding were submitted by aquaculture facility owners and reviewed. One major investigation of rule infractions was undertaken in 2002. This investigation is still in process. The number of Fish Health Policy Board meetings attended was four. The number of nuisance species meetings attended was two. One memorandum of understanding was developed with DWR and the Mosquito Abatement Districts, which allows for the reasonable testing of mosquito fish.

The Program is dedicated to the continuous improvement of fish health programs, reduction of unnecessary paperwork, customer satisfaction and remaining within the budget. It is the primary aim of the Fish Health Program to prevent and control the spread of fish diseases and still assist aquaculture operators to succeed in business. Specialists work overtime to complete these tasks, and this is done within current budget constraints.

Organic Certification/Investigation and Compliance

The Agriculture Investigator is responsible to protect Utah agriculture producers and consumers by licensing and bonding all individuals who purchase and resell agricultural commodities. The legislature has re-emphasized the need to protect Utah producers, and aggressively seek out any person who is a dealer, broker or agent purchasing for resale or commission or is entrusted with the management, control or disposal of any agriculture product for a producer. The investigator will work with Local County, State and Federal authorities in enforcing this act. The investigator also works with the eight Livestock Auction Markets and several buying stations in the state, which are bonded and licensed. In conjunction with the Attorney Generals Office, the specialist works with Division Directors enforcing actions resulting in Administrative Hearings.

Utah was accredited by the United States Department of Agriculture National Organic Program to certify organic products. With this certification, Utah has been inspecting and certifying organic farmers, livestock producers, processors/handlers and wild crop harvests. The program has certified beef, lamb, cosmetics, fruits and vegetables as well as coffee and grains. This program was implemented at the request of organic producers in Utah. The program is funded by reimbursement of fees charged to the producers. Organic foods are offered as an alternative for consumers. Certification offers a third party verification that a set of standards meeting the criteria of the term "Organic" have been met, and a quality system is in place for the production and handling of organic foods. Persons certifying under these standards are allowed to use the USDA or UDAF logo on the packaging representing "Certified Organic" product with ingredients greater than 95% organic. Any product that is called organic is required to have this third party verification and inspection. Investigators will be involved in surveillance at farmers markets, grocery stores and roadside stands enforcing organic regulations and verifying certified organic operations.

